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ALLEN-SCOTT REPORT

Inside Washington

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Reds Organizing 'International Brigade' to Fight In South Viet Nam; Cuba Main Assembly Point

WASHINGTON — Intelligence authorities have reports from usually knowledgeable sources that an "international brigade" of Communist "volunteers" is being organized in North Viet Nam.

Reputed aim in forming this mercenary unit is to provide the Reds with a dramatic propaganda basis for claiming worldwide support against "U.S. imperialism."

This plan apparently is patterned after the Communist-initiated and commanded "Lincoln (international) Brigade" that fought on the side of the republic in the Spanish civil war. A number of U.S. nationals joined this outfit.

Existence of this hush-hush information is admitted at the State and Defense Departments. Beyond that, all comment is withheld.

However, the following details from other sources can be reported:

The Red mercenaries are to be pitted primarily against U.S. troops in South Viet Nam. This would be in line with the employment of the "Lincoln Brigade" in Spain. It was used against the Moorish forces of Generalissimo Franco.

U.S. nationals already are undergoing combat training in a North Viet Nam camp near the Chinese border. Exact number of these Americans is unknown. But they include some Negroes.

The "brigade" is to be made up of "volunteers" from all parts of the world — Asians, Europeans, Africans, North and South Americans.

Recruiting centers are being financed and operated by local Communist parties. Recruiting is particularly active in Latin America under the direction of the Castro regime. Cuba is a main assembly point for these "volunteers." While waiting for transportation (mainly air) to North Viet Nam, they are being given preliminary training.

liminary training.

"Che" Guevara, close Castro lieutenant who has mysteriously been out of sight for months, is credited as playing a leading role in this covert activity. Guevara is rated an expert in guerrilla warfare.

In North Viet Nam, two training camps have been set up for these "volunteers." One is manned by military officers and other personnel from Soviet bloc countries; the other by Red Chinese, North Koreans and some Indonesians.

REVEALING TALK

As confirmation of these reports, intelligence authorities are attaching much significance to a recent little-noticed statement by Nguyen Huu Tho, president of the presidium of the Viet Cong National Liberation Front.

In a broadcast over Radio Hanoi, Tho in effect acknowledged existence of the "international brigade."

"Peoples all over the world," he said "are ready to support us or are actively supporting us in all fields, including volunteers and weapons. The people in the Soviet Union, China and other socialist countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, as well as the U.S., are rallying into a powerful movement in support of the struggle of our people against foreign aggression and imperialism."

Intelligence experts point out that in previous pronouncements, Tho and other Viet Cong leaders portrayed themselves as guerrillas fighting their own battles.

NEXT VIET NAM SHIFT

Deputy Ambassador U. Alexis Johnson, who handled the diplomatic end in Saigon while former Ambassador Maxwell Taylor ran the military, will get another assignment. It is certain to be a top post as he is rated one of our best career diplomats. With Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge taking over in Saigon and General Westmoreland made theater commander, Johnson won't be needed. . . . During Ghana Foreign Minister Alex Quaison-Sackey's discussions at the State Department, before going to the White House to deliver President Kwame Nkrumah's letter to President Johnson, he intimated Red China might be willing to negotiate on Viet Nam in exchange for admittance to the United Nations. Quaison-Sackey hinted that was the word brought back by the Ghanaian mission to Hanoi. State Department officials listened without comment.

The U.S. Navy is enlarging and intensifying its anti-submarine operations in the Viet Nam area. The seaplane tender Currituck, flying the flag of Rear Admiral Richard Fowler, directs a force that flies and sails from the Gulf of Siam to the Chinese border. Under Fowler's command is a fleet ranging from junks to destroyers and 80-foot Coast Guard cutters, and long-range patrol bombers with the latest radar equipment. Red China is estimated to have 50 submarines of Soviet make. They are divided into five fleets and are based at Yulin on the Hainan coast; Chanchiang in South China; Shanghai, Chou Shan, Wenchow and Sansha in East China; Port Arthur in Manchuria; and Tsingtao in North China.

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